



Mukilteo Multimodal Ferry Terminal Project EIS Public Scoping Comment Summary Report

February 17 – April 5, 2006



**Washington State
Department of Transportation**



Mukilteo Multimodal Ferry Terminal Project

EIS Public Scoping Summary

Introduction

Washington State Ferries (WSF) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are planning a new multimodal ferry terminal in Mukilteo. The existing terminal is old and in need of major repairs. It cannot efficiently handle current and projected growth on the route, or meet future security requirements. The new ferry terminal and the planned Sound Transit Commuter Rail Station will be co-located at the former Mukilteo Tank Farm property, just east of the current facility.

The project is undergoing an environmental review process in accordance with the National and State Environmental Policy Acts (NEPA/SEPA). The process will analyze possible impacts and evaluate potential alternatives for the terminal. The process started under an Environmental Assessment (EA). WSF completed the NEPA EA scoping process in November of 2004. The EA Public Scoping Summary Report can be found on the project website at www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/mukilteoterminal.

Upon completion of environmental discipline studies it was determined that the possible effects of the proposed action upon natural and cultural resources should receive more detailed analysis, and therefore the project team decided to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). NEPA EIS scoping meetings were held in March 2006. Agencies with jurisdiction, interested parties and the public were asked to comment on the project's purpose and need, and the alternatives being evaluated under the EIS according to the provisions of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Act: A legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) Section 6002. Additionally, comments on mitigation measures, probable significant adverse impacts, and licenses or approvals were invited.

This report outlines the EIS public scoping process and summarizes the public comments that were received during the scoping period. The entire text of all the comments received is included in a separate document (Appendix A).

EIS Scoping

The purpose of scoping is to allow the public, agencies and interested parties to comment on the range of issues to be addressed during the environmental review process. The public scoping period ran from February 17 to April 5, 2006¹. WSF invited all interested parties to submit comments and made available several methods for the public to provide input during this period including:

- E-mail—mukilteoferryproject@wsdot.wa.gov

¹ WSF will incorporate comments received outside of the official scoping period into the scoping record.

- Mail—Attn: Joy Goldenberg, 2901 3rd Ave., Suite 500, Seattle WA 98121
- Public open houses where participants filled out comment forms and recorded verbal comments
- Website—www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/mukilteoterminal. Project materials, including the comment form, are available on the project website (and in community locations).

WSF reviewed all comments and took the following actions:

- Sent an e-mail or postcard to acknowledge receipt of comment
- Recorded the text of the comment and contact information of the individual into the project database
- Summarized the comments and provided a report, and all of the comments, to the project team.

EIS Public Scoping Open Houses

WSF held two public scoping open houses—on March 21 (Mukilteo) and March 22 (Clinton) from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Approximately 75 people attended the events. The purpose of the open houses was to inform communities on both sides of the Mukilteo-Clinton route of the environmental review process, to receive input on the project and to provide a project update.

The public was notified of the open houses in several ways, including:

- Mailed approximately 33,000 notices to residents and businesses in Mukilteo and selected areas of Whidbey Island and Everett, and to contacts in the project database
- E-mailed notices to route list and contacts in the project database
- Distributed notices at Mukilteo and Clinton terminals and on vessels on the Mukilteo-Clinton route
- Distributed notices and project information at Mukilteo City Hall, Mukilteo Library, Clinton Library and targeted Korean community centers
- Advertised in the Mukilteo Beacon, the South Whidbey Record and the Everett Herald
- Sent news release to media contacts in area
- Provided information on the WSF project website—<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/mukilteoterminal>.

The same information was available at both meetings. Display boards were placed throughout the room and project team members were available to answer questions and discuss issues with attendees. Copies of the display boards were distributed as handouts along with a comment form, project description and purpose and need statement.

Participants provided feedback by writing comments or verbally providing comments to a court reporter². Comment stations were positioned throughout the room, allowing participants to sit and fill out the comment form at the meeting. Project materials included project contact information—e-mail, mail, phone and the project website—so individuals could provide comments following the open houses.

Summary of Comments

The project received a total of 25 comments during the EIS scoping period. The project team expected to receive fewer comments because of already completing scoping during the EA process (to date the project has received a total of 422 comments, most of those during EA scoping). Of the 25 comments, three requested that they be included on the project mailing list or asked for information, but provided no feedback about the project. The remaining 22 provided comments about the project. The table below categorizes the comments by how they were received and origin.

Comment Format	Responses Received	Mukilteo Respondents	Whidbey Island Respondents	Other Areas
E-mail	8	1	5	2 unknown
Public Meeting Comment Form	16	10	4	2
Mail	1	1	0	0
Total	25	12	9	4

Open house participants stated that they were most interested in the project because they:

- Lived nearby (14 references)
- Are occasional ferry riders (4 references)
- Are regular ferry riders (3 references)

Participants were also asked to identify what project issues are most important to them³. The responses are summarized below. Direct quotes (italicized) are included to provide a sample of the tone of the comments. Comment reference numbers are listed so that the entire comments can be referenced in Appendix A.

- Traffic (13 references)

Attention needs to be given to traffic safety and movement at the bottom of HWY 525 in Clinton, i.e. in the vicinity of the stop light/toll booths.

² Court reporter was not available at Clinton.

³ Most individuals identified more than one issue.

This project needs to face up congestion on SR 525 to allow Mukilteo free access to the road. An access road to the ferry depot needs to be developed down Japanese Gulch to relieve traffic on SR 525.

Concern for increase traffic flow on 2nd, 3rd and Mukilteo Lane. How will this be mitigated?

Much has been made of how ferry traffic affects Mukilteo. From a planning perspective I think it is important to consider the effect of the increased traffic—foot and vehicular—will have on Clinton. Adding the ferry dock, additional bus connections and Sounder stop will inevitably increase traffic through downtown Clinton. This is turn will likely encourage increased population growth in Clinton and a resulting pressure on DOT and the ferry system to manage traffic, similar to what you are currently experiencing in Mukilteo. I strongly urge your planning efforts to include thinking regarding how to manage traffic through Clinton. You have a chance to manage the problem now; you may have less influence later.

- Environment (8 references)

I just hope it has a minimal impact on sea life. There is a lot gone since it was dredged up but should be able to revive with time.

I firmly believe that making it ever easier for people to go from Mukilteo to Clinton and back can only have a negative environmental impact. I am opposed to any such projects. You should be discouraging, not encouraging auto use!!

How will noise from vehicles in the holding lane be mitigated? Will emissions be restricted (vehicles turn off engines)?

- Inter-modal connections (6 references)

Please plan train service with non-commuter users in mind. Seattle offers a rich variety of evening activities; theatre, symphony, opera, museums, readings and speeches by major authors and authorities, jazz and other music in nightclubs, baseball, college and professional basketball – provide rail service to and from downtown until midnight.

I am particularly interested in train connections!! Soon?!

- Public access to waterfront (6 references)

Extend promenade in both directions with connecting shoreline trails.

Support relocation of public boat ramp from Lighthouse Park to 'Tank Farm' site.

Glad to see friendly for scuba diving. I hope to see old location open to diving and restroom stay open. Adding an outside shower would be nice to rinse off gear.

- Parking (4 references)

Please let everyone know how to help get funding for the garage. I believe the garage is very important to the success of the project.

Must include large parking garage (to minimize the size of parking outside the garage).

- Safety (3 references)
- Economic opportunities (2 references)

I am interested in the waterfront use and development.

Two alternatives for the terminal design were developed by WSF for discussion during the scoping period. Open house participants were asked their preference between the two alternatives and for additional suggestions or other alternatives for consideration. Below is a summary of preferences.

- Compact Terminal Alternative (11 references)

The compact plan insures best space allocation for ferry traffic and minimizes loss of area for public use.

Basic design drawing looks good to me.

- Upland Terminal Alternative (2 references)

Although I hear the pollution concerns residents.

- No preference (1 reference)

Jury still out – costs, environment, security etc.

Get rid of the old ugly Naval Pier!